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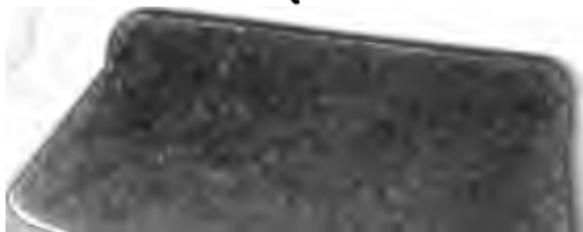
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DIVINE AND HUMAN Knowledge.

BY

THE REV. F. CLOSE, A.M.

PERPETUAL CURATE OF CHELTENHAM.

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1841.

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INTRODUCTION.

THESE Lectures, delivered and published at the request of the Cheltenham Church of England Association, are presented to the public as nearly as possible in the language in which they were spoken.' The Author has written them from his own notes, assisted by those of a practiced Reporter. Without affecting verbal accuracy, he can affirm that he has in every instance rather strengthened than weakened the terms of his pro-

positions ; and, in some parts, he has added sentences, in order to express his meaning more accurately than can be expected from an extempore delivery.

Deeply and honestly impressed with the value and importance of the truths for which he is here contending, he desires only a candid perusal, and a fair trial by the only standard of truth, *the Holy Scriptures*. He writes not to please men, nor does he wish to offend them ; he hopes he has their good at heart, *though some may think him mistaken*

in the mode which he adopts to further it ; "his judgment is with his God." Earnestly contending for the faith, he wishes "if it be possible, as much as lieth in him, to live peaceably with all men."

To the members of this Association, he presents this little publication, hoping that the sale of it may, in some little measure, benefit the funds of the Institution, which have become in some degree burthened by the fitting up of a new room, once the den of Socialists, now the resort of Christian brethren.

The Author would add, that if any person reading these lines, should feel disposed to contribute, either in books or in a pecuniary way, to the support of this institution, the Author will be happy to acknowledge their bounty.

His prayers are offered for a blessing upon this humble effort to promote the glory of God and the good of man.

CHELTENHAM; Nov 26, 1841.



DIVINE & HUMAN KNOWLEDGE.

LECTURE I.

It gives me much pleasure to find myself for the first time among you in the character of Lecturer to the Cheltenham Church of England Working Men's Association ; which has for its object the improvement of your minds in religious and useful knowledge. With such an object in view, the deeply interesting subject which I have chosen for my consider-

deration cannot be inappropriate—
“*Divine and Human Knowledge*.”
But I must observe that the terms
of my theme by no means adequately
express all that I intended to convey.
I would speak not merely of *know-*
ledge, but of the power, *the mental*
perception, by which knowledge is
received. And as there are two
kinds, or great branches of know-
ledge, viz; *divine and human*—so
are there two kinds of mental powers
by which they must be acquired.
It will be the great object of my pre-
sent lectures to mark the peculiar
characteristics by which these two
principles or powers are to be dis-
tinguished—the confusion of these
appears to me to be the fruitful source

of all error in our philosophical and educational pursuits in the present day.

These two powers are in their very nature totally distinct. First, the powers of the human mind, or *intellect*; and second, the faculty by which the renewed man comprehends spiritual truths, and which may be termed, *the spiritual perception*; and is the gift of God's grace to the soul. In reflecting upon these two subjects, their dimensions have grown upon me so much, that I find it impossible to discuss them in one lecture. I must, therefore, defer the consideration of "*Spiritual Perception*," to a future occasion; confining myself at present, to what must be a brief

and imperfect enquiry into the ~~po~~
~~wer~~
of man's mind, unassisted by re-
lation.

What are the natural powers of the *human intellect*? Have they, in themselves, any *moral qualities*, and of *what kind*? What will be the *result* of an enlargement and development of these powers, unaided by moral, religious, or divine influence? And, as arising out of this question, another—whether education, taken in the vulgar sense of word (for the mere acquisition of secular knowledge), tends directly to moral virtue and religion. I shall contend that it does not—I shall endeavour to strip *mere human philosophy* of some of its gaudy habili-

ments, and exhibit the moral deformity of its natural character.

Consider, then, the philosophy of the human mind! Its intellectual capacities! How vast, how illimitable do they seem! Mysterious, unsearchable! When we gaze upon the material frame in which that mighty spirit dwells—the human body—we pronounce it wonderful: but here we are assisted by the inferior senses. The skilful surgeon can dissect the body, classify its members, and trace in all its complicated construction the Creator's wisdom; but who can dissect the human soul? Who can analyze its parts? Who can define or limit its powers of ratiocination—reflection—

what—out who can follow intellect
in its flight, or set bounds to its ram-
blings? This moment my thought
may rise to the highest heaven, and
in less than a second it may descend
into the depths of hell! I do not
wonder that men, unacquainted with
the higher powers of *spiritual per-*
ception, and untaught by revelation,
bow down and worship this intellec-
tual deity—*the human mind!*

Yet viewed again, in the light of
true philosophy, and examined by

the Holy Scriptures, this vaunted power is infinitely reduced in its dimensions. Wonderful as these powers seem, there is a limit, and a *very* finite limit, with which they are circumscribed. The human mind is an intellectual machine, formed by the Great Spirit for certain purposes; and these only can it accomplish. Mind actually creates nothing. As a cotton machine receives the raw material, and produces the colour and patterns intended by the manufacturer—so the mind *receives all its ideas from without*—it has incalculable powers of combination and separation, and the results we call *invention*; but if nothing were imbedded to it, that is, if no knowledge

ere communicated to it, the mind
ould be vacant and idiotic! Could
child be wholly excluded from all
annels of outward perception, it
ould be an idiot. This experiment,
deed, it would be next to impos-
ible to try, because He who formed
an's mind, has created such an in-
finite diversity of means of acquiring
knowledge, that the hand of man
uld not wholly exclude them.

I believe this theory of the mind
be that received by the best me-
physicians. And if .it be correct,
e might here at once take our stand,
d argue that if, even in secular
knowledge, all the furniture of the
man mind must come from without
and its powers are rather digestive

than *inventive*—then it follows, of necessity, that this must be pre-eminently the case as to spiritual things—*as to the knowledge of God!* My ideas on this point are perspicuously stated in the following quotation from a learned annotator.*

“ From a consideration of the powers and faculties of the human understanding, it is demonstrable that it cannot attain to knowledge of any kind without some external communication. It cannot perceive, unless the impression be made on the organs of perception ; it cannot form ideas without perceptions ; it cannot judge without a comparison of ideas ; it cannot form a proposition without this ex-

* Townsend's Harmony of the New Testament, vol. ii. page 7 and part of 8.

ercise of its judgment; it cannot reason, argue, or syllogize, without this previous formation of propositions to be examined and compared. Such is the procedure of the human understanding in the work of ratiocination; whence it clearly follows that it can, in the first instance, do nothing of itself; that is, it cannot begin its operations till it be supplied with material to work upon, which materials must come from without; and that the mind, unfurnished with these, is incapable of attaining even to the lowest degree of knowledge. Without revelation, therefore, it is certain that man never could have discovered the mind or will of God, or have obtained any knowledge of spiritual things."

But we come now to a further and most important enquiry: has the *mind*, the intellect of man, in itself *any moral qualities*, and of what na-

ture are they? We hear and read much in praise of intellectual pursuits, as if they must necessarily be innocent and virtuous in their tendency: and the pure intelligence, and refined spirit of man, is spoken of as if it were an angel from heaven. Reason is deified; as if man would listen to *that*, he would no longer yield to his passions and be led away from virtue. But we are prepared to contend that *that* very reason, and all his intellectual faculties, are in themselves tainted and corrupted by the fall: not only so—that it is the nobler powers of man that enslave his baser ones, and that he is the victim of his passions, only because he is an *intellectual sinner*; that his mind is

to speak against that only book, to which I, as a Christian, or as a minister of God, will consent to bow even on a metaphysical subject; believing, as I do, that in that book the truest principles of philosophy are to be found, excelling far all the books of ancient or modern philosophers.

To the scriptures of God then I appeal on this *moral, metaphysical point*: what is the moral state of

man's mind? The earliest record on this point is found in Genesis vi. 5. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth :"—and in what did it consist? "*Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*" The language of the original is very comprehensive, and our translators in the margin say it includes all "the purposes and desires." The judgment, will, and all the combination of the thinking and reasoning faculties were exclusively and continually evil. Of the few survivors of the flood, of whom the whole world was overpread, this same testimony is given by God himself:—"The imagination of man's heart is evil from

th." Long afterwards, St. affirmed the same truth; for — "that *the understanding* is *darkened*, and that they *hated* from the life of God the ignorance that is in *cause of the blindness of their* — (Ephes. iv. 18.) The fall was an *intellectual fall*; *ef*-*y* that master-spirit of evil, a being of intellectual power *passing ours*. Man became as *issions, animal*, and as to his *itanic*: his intellect lost the *image of God*, and received the *of the power of darkness*: *result necessarily is*, that *ne reasons well on all secular* *on religious ones he draws*

only false conclusions. And hence it is that some men of gigantic intellect have been guilty of the most absurd puerilities on sacred subjects. The first display of the fallen reason of man was made in Paradise itself ; he had attained forbidden knowledge —and the possession of it drove him away from God ; and when dragged from his hiding place and convicted—his defence was a sophistry, impugning the goodness of God. “ The woman which thou gavest me—she gave me of the tree, and I did eat” —insinuating that God was the occasion of the fall, and the author of evil ! And to similar conclusions the unassisted intellect of man has ever since disposed him. Reason in

fallen man is a corrupt judge; ~~and~~ the powers of the mind of man are ~~in~~ themselves sinful; mighty they may be, and of vast dimensions, but mighty only from evil and averse from good.

The same scriptures teach us, not only, that the intellect of man is immoral, but that it is at enmity with God, and often in its most highly cultivated state has proved the most formidable barrier to the reception and diffusion of truth. Philosophy and human wisdom are continually found in array against the servants of God. Who opposed Moses in Egypt, Daniel in Babylon, or Paul *at Athens?* Was it the ignorant *rabble, or the wise men, and astro-*

logers, and magi? All the powers of the philosophic world in three ages, and in their respective ascendancy, ranged themselves against God's truth. Perhaps of all the faithful antagonists who encountered them, St. Paul is the most unexceptionable witness: as well because he was himself a man of no mean capacity of intellect, nor despicable education, and because he came in contact with the schools of the learned in every part of the civilized world; and that at a period when those schools had reached the zenith of their excellence. Yet in none of the recorded addresses of St. Paul, at Athens, and at the different seats of learning, nor in his epistles, do we find one word of ap-

"that a good education is the best pioneer of religion :"—He found it otherwise ; the most literate were the most opposed to him—and philosophy formed a barrier to his progress only equalled by the bigotry of the Rabbies—and viewing both these powers of evil he placed them in the same scale, among the enemies of God. "The Jews required a sign"—they are ignorant, superstitious, bigotted ; "and the Greeks seek after wisdom"—they are proud, philosophic, infidel ; but to the one and the other "we preach *Christ crucified*, to the Jews, a

saved, Christ the power of Go
the wisdom of God." Thus
rancé and wisdom, stand in the
position—either of them, or bot
equally God's enemies if unsan
by grace! And why?—becau
the moral deformity of the mind
If that mind be essential enm
God—if its rational and refl
powers have received an evil b
the fall—then it follows of nec

Dr. Channing, an American, philosopher, and a Unitarian, may be received as a witness to this point by some who may despise my testimony : and he says—

"The exaltation of talent, as it is called above virtue and religion, is the curse of the age. Education is now chiefly a stimulus to learning ; and thus men acquire power, *without the principles which alone can make it a good.* Talent is worshipped—but if divorced from rectitude, it will prove more of a *demon* than of a *God.*"*

I fear these observations are applicable, not only to some modern schools of philosophy, but even to some well meaning religionists ; there seems a coquetting in some quarters *between philosophy and religion* ; a

* "Self Culture." Page 14.

disposition to confound things which differ ; and to attribute to mere literature a moralizing and improving quality which it by no means really possesses. The intellectual person may be as far from God as the sensual —and the two are very frequently identical ; the highest attainments in science, philosophy, and literature, have been found in persons infidel in principle and profligate in practice.

The late Rev. J. G. Dowling, of the neighbouring city of Gloucester, though a divine, was generally admitted to have been a person of singular attainments in general literature and science. His early and sudden death cast a general gloom over the neighbourhood. Yet he, in a lecture

delivered on a similar occasion ~~to~~ at present, expressed sentiments ~~very~~ similar to those I am endeavouring to establish.*

"To expect," said he, "that secular knowledge of any sort is ever likely to produce any beneficial effect upon the moral condition of society in general, is mere fanaticism. All history shews, that hitherto the increased diffusion of literature has, in fact, operated rather injuriously upon morals. It is religion only that can elevate and improve them."

He was a man of extensive reading; and hear his deliberate opinion of the general character of modern litera-

* *The Effects of Literature upon the Moral Character. A Lecture, &c. by the Rev. J. G. Dowling. Rivington.*

ture; and *this fact*, if it be true, bears strongly upon the immorality of man's mind itself.—(p. 27.)

"A very large portion of the existing literature of all nations is decidedly noxious. To say nothing of one extensive class, I mean sophistical and licentious books, the great mass of literature is of an exceedingly equivocal nature. A very few only of the most popular authors can be admitted, by the largest charity, to have been men of wisdom and virtue. Most works of imagination which have obtained celebrity, derive their value from the power they possess of raising the passions, and producing an excitement which is very far from salutary to the moral being. * * There are very few books of which a great part is not positive falsehood and ignorance."

Had this been the testimony of

any but a distinguished scholar, should not have adduced it; neither should I have cited it, did I not believe it to be most strictly and accurately true.

Such, then, is the estimate I take of the moral delinquency of man's intellectual powers, and of the noxious tendency of *merely secular*, philosophical, pursuits.

And here I shall be met by some objections to this theory, which must be noticed. It may be asked, for instance, how I reconcile this theory with the generally admitted fact, that even in this day, we have recourse to the writings of the ancient philosophers, poets, and historians, for *some of our sublimest ideas in morals*

and science—men immersed in the darkness of heathenism? I should be happy to join issue on this exact point, and stake the truth or falsehood of what I must call the scriptural theory, upon it. It may be easily proved—and at greater length than I can possibly attempt now—*first*, that whatever was most noble in morals, and certainly every gleam of truth in religion, which is found among the ancients, was stolen from our sacred altars; and secondly, that all the chief and greatest of the ancient writers, were themselves the dupes of a silly superstition, and the victims of the most degrading vices.

Upon the former point I will only observe, that it is well known that

the ancient Greek writers down to a certain date, were *polytheists*, and had no conception of one Supreme Being; after that date the unity of the Deity begins dimly to be discovered by them; and, at the same time, more just and sublime views on morals. Now, it is matter of historic evidence, that at *that* exact time the sages of Greece visited Babylon, in search of the fountains of wisdom. By comparative chronology we discover that they must have visited that capital of science, while Daniel presided amidst its scavans; they beheld the holy fire of revelation, and stealing a torch, lighted up the fires of Grecian literature: insomuch that, in some of the Greek plays, there are

elaborate figures borrowed from Jeremiah and Ezekiel! I must not stop to do more than record this indisputable fact, whence it appears that all subsequent excellence in the later writers may be traced to a divine source.*

But after all, miserable are the gleanings of truth or virtue in the writings of the ancient heathen, and they overflow with pollution in morals and folly in religion. In an admirable volume, published some years ago by an estimable Christian philosopher,

"What Socrates said of the Deity, what Plato writ, and the rest of the heathen philosophers of several nations, is all no more than the twilight of revelation, after the sun of it was set in the race of Noah." — Dryden's Preface to *Religio Laici*.

passages; but in an age when men will deify the powers of the human mind, and raise carnal science to a level with revelation, truth must be spoken. The most distinguished of these philosophers disbelieved all the great verities of religion, and credited the most absurd mythology. I need not observe that the ancient deities were mere personifications of all the vices, and some of them of

* *Lectures on the Christian Religion, &c.* (6th Edition.) Baldwin, London. Letter iii. p. 20. &c.

a description too abominable to be named. "The belief of a future state was totally set at nought by the majority both of Greeks and Romans."—(p. 23.) Socrates remarked that the opinion of the soul being *blown away and perishing with the body*, was that most generally received. Polybius esteems future rewards and punishments as only *useful fictions*. Cæsar, Cato, Pliny, judged them, "*senseless fictions of mortals, who are ambitious of a never-ending existence.*" Of love to God or man, the ancients were wholly ignorant. This has been disputed. Yet what is the benevolence of Plato, but the refinement of malice. "By no means," says he, "punish your

*so you defeat your own purpose
of revenge.* Leave him to the will
uncontrolled, uncounteracted influence
of his moral depravity, *because*
that is the greatest evil which can
endure." Legislators, poets,
philosophers, were all equally
involved in the same errors.

Lycurgus himself, one whom historians
terms "rather a god than a man,"
many of his laws were fraught with
cruelty and vice. He encouraged
the whipping of boys to death.

also, *common baths*, in which
of both sexes were compelled to
together! and Lycurgus, he
decreed that the youth of both
should dance together in a state
nudity at solemn festivals!
*were philosophic legislation
morals, without revelation !!*

The Greek and Latin poets are
toriously immoral—and deeply so.
a Christian father regret that his sons
cannot receive a literate education
without being necessarily plunged
some degree in the mire of heat
pollution! Would that some Christian
scholar would lend his power
to publication of editions of classics
writers, from which such drea
were expunged!

~~Accordance with their principles.~~ Socrates, Plato, Zenophon, Aeschines, Cebes, &c. were chargeable with unnatural lusts and vices, which they reckoned among things of an indifferent nature. They generally allowed of fornication, as having nothing in it sinful, or contrary to reason. "Many of them pleaded for suicide—most of them thought lying lawful, when profitable."—(p. 32.) "A wise man might, upon a fit occasion, commit theft, adultery, and sacrilege; for that none of those things are base in their own nature," and the opinions against them were only "*for restraining fools!*"

Socrates died dedicating "a cock to Æsculapius"—taught the doctrine of the transmigration of souls; but only for philosophers, who had the privilege "of becoming animals of a social kind, such as bees and ants!" *Sublime destiny of the philosophic tribe!* Socrates also recommended *divination*—for infidelity and superstition are twins—and Tertullian remarks that he was condemned at Athens, among other things, for unnatural offences and *corrupting of youth*, and was addicted to incontinence and fornication." *Plato*, his great disciple, appears to have rivalled the modern Owen, and to have rendered vice gregarious. "He prescribes a community of wives in his

commonwealth," (not the "~~new~~
world," but the *old!*) "and ~~P.~~
down laws for the express purp.
of destroying all parental and ~~famil~~
affection—affirms that all things re-
specting women, marriage, &c. should
be entirely common among friends—
decrees infanticide—allows of drunk-
enness at the feast of Bachus." Who
would not say, "*Plato, thou reasonest
well!*" *Aristotle*, the profound lo-
gician and critic, affirms "that the
stars are true eternal deities"—ex-
actly the creed of the modern *New
Zealand savage*!! He denies that
any providence extends to things
below the moon—approves of infan-
ticide — encourages revenge—and
teaches that death is annihilation!

The time would fail, and the task is loathsome, to cite the great literati of Rome, who followed too closely in the steps of the Greeks. Cicero, Pliny, Plutarch, Cato of Utica, and Seneca, all plead for, or practised, suicide, drunkenness, fornication, and childish superstitions.

And is this all that intellect, in its best estate, could do for the children of men ? Alas, for philosophy ! it may be said that these were faults, not of men, but of *times* ! But who make times, but the people who flourish in them ? The absence of revelation only proves all I wish to prove, viz : that the *mind, genius, imagination, and reason of man*, are *atheistical and immoral* ; and that

the fruits of unsanctified sciences,
literature, and philosophy. Rousseau's testimony to the character of
such infidel philosophy in his day, is,
to say the least, curious :

" I have consulted our philosophers, I
have perused their books, I have examined
their several opinions ; I have found them
all proud, positive, and dogmatizing, even
in their pretended scepticism ; knowing
every thing, proving nothing, and ridi-

" — another and this is the only

acter of
his day, is,

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sophers were :
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coming to disti
hood, would not
the truth that is
Where is the ph
own glory, would
the whole human
who, in the secret
poses any other
distinction."

Another objector may say—while you thus mow down all evidences in favour of mere philosophy and literature, as tending to morals and religion; you appear to forget how much good service they do to revelation when it is possessed, what powerful tributaries at least, they are—or as they are often termed "*the handmaids of religion.*" True—but handmaids are sometimes apt to forget their place, and to thrust out their mistress, or at least to sit beside her! Infidel philosophers, historians, and literati, even when waging war against religion, have often become the reluctant witnesses of truth. Many, merely scientific *persons in the pursuit of simple phi-*

losophy, and without any pious intention, have also yielded a rich harvest to the evidences of the truth of revealed religion ; *but no thanks to them—they meant not so*—it was farthest from their thoughts—and it was not until some Christian, imbued with that *spiritual perception* of which I shall speak in my next lecture, seized their facts and pressed them into the service of religion, that they were convertible to this purpose ! And after all, it should be remembered that all the service which human science can do for religion, has reference to external evidences only : facts and arguments may be suggested which may carry the doubts of the sceptic, as it were, by storm—he

may be convinced of the truth of revelation against his will ; but he is not a true believer—" his faith only stands by the wisdom of man, and not by the power of God." The heart, the affection, the life, may be uninfluenced—he is not a Christian.

For this reason it is that (if I may be allowed to digress) I confess I am a little jealous of the mode in which secular, is blended with religious learning in some of our Christian schools, especially in *Sunday Schools*. It is in its measure important that the children's minds should be informed respecting the geography of the Holy Land—for locality often gives interest to incident : the manners and customs of ancient Eastern countries

often throw light on scriptural allusions ; but it is very necessary to keep up clearly in the minds of the children what is *divine* and what is *human knowledge*; to mark that which has the impress of God, and to distinguish it from that which is merely of man. In our day schools, I would rather that *secular knowledge* were imparted *religiously*, than that *religious knowledge* should be conveyed in *a secular manner*; the inferior may be sanctified by the superior, but the superior is weakened by the inferior : there must be direct, holy, devout, personal, spiritual, instruction in our schools, above, and beyond, and distinct from secular—even from the *secularities* of scripture itself—

as its geography, its history, and its evidences. This is indeed in close affiance with the chief object of my present and subsequent lecture, viz : to distinguish between mere intellect, and spiritual understanding, between the knowledge which is of man, and that which is of God. The former I have now considered and examined ; as to all purposes of morals and religion (*which is the only point I am canvassing*) I have proved that it is imbecile, or worse than imbecile. When I have considered the nature and extent of spiritual perception, I shall find science and literature in their proper places, at the feet of *revelation*—not its precursors, but its *followers*—not its masters, but its

when occupying their
useful, praiseworthy,
ing to the glory of Him
the God of *creation*, of
nd of *grace*. May that
d guide us into all truth !



DIVINE & HUMAN KNOWLEDGE.

LECTURE II.

It is matter of regret to me, that in the opening of my last lecture I omitted a paramount duty. A minister of God ought to undertake nothing upon which he cannot ask God's blessing. And if this be done at all our religious and charitable meetings, how much more should it be done when we are treating on subjects confessedly difficult and ob-

scure; and on which the human mind pre-eminently needs divine influence. Before, therefore, we enter upon the more profound subject of our enquiry this night, let me request you to unite with me in asking help of the Father of Spirits.

[LET US PRAY.]

“PREVENT us, O Lord, in all our doings with thy most gracious favour—and further us with thy continual help; that in *this*, and all our works, begun, continued, and ended in Thee, we may glorify thy name, and finally, by thy mercy, obtain eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*”

I feel assured that the minds of all *here present* have devoutly joined *with me* in this brief aspiration to

Almighty God ; and I feel equally confident that when, impelled by principle and habit, I spread God's word before me, and announce to you that upon such a subject as this, viz : *Spiritual Perception and Divine Knowledge*, I shall defer only to this inspired tribunal.—I feel confident, I say, that I shall also in this. carry along with me your approbation. Upon such a topic, human science and philosophy utterly fail me. I cannot here, as in my former lecture, have recourse to human authorities ; —to the fountain of eternal truth, pure, unsullied—*to the infallible Scriptures*—I must go to learn what is *Divine Knowledge*, and what is *Spiritual Perception*.

.... and or argument which I pursued in the former lecture, of which this is an integral continuance.

first examined the powers of the human mind—their nature and extent. I proved that though apparently vast, and almost illimitable, they are, in fact, *very* finite; that they originate nothing, but only combine and separate, and deduce inferences from the subject matter communicated.

passions, *is corrupt*; that he is an intellectual sinner, and that the very fountains of ratiocination within him, are, by the fall, stamped with the image of Satan! I went further, and maintained that the scripture proves that even cultivated intellect had ever presented the greatest barrier to the progress of revealed religion—that the deepest ignorance and superstition did not offer greater obstacles to the Gospel, than did the vain philosophy and science of Greece and Rome. Hence I argued that the mere cultivation of the mind can have no tendency to impart moral qualities—that secular education, science, and philosophy, dissevered from revealed religion, and irrespec-

tive of it, could not have any beneficial effect on the moral character of man. I did *not* speak of *the advantages or disadvantages of science, as it exists in a Christian country*, and subordinated to religion—that naturally would fall into my present lecture; but my theme was heathen and infidel philosophy—what it could do for man's mind in its natural and unconverted state. It was in meeting two objections which I anticipated, that I established the real character of the far-famed philosophers, poets, and historians of Greece and Rome; proving that while they have displayed wonderful literary and scientific powers, eloquence, imagination. *genius,—that nevertheless, nothing*

could exceed the depravity of their morals, or the folly of their mythology ; so that the creed of the great Aristotle was on a level with the New Zealand savage—each believing that the stars were true eternal deities ! I showed further, that the evidences and proofs which philosophy had afforded to revealed religion, were such only as godly persons, endued with spiritual perception, had gathered from them ; that science, philosophy, and human knowledge, abstractedly considered, had no moral nor religious tendencies ; but that the labours of their disciples were *pressed* into the service of God by faithful men.

I now pass on to a more pleasing topic—to *Divine Knowledge* ; and

..... occasion, I shall
deavour to consider, first, what
properly *Divine Knowledge*: &
secondly, the *power* by which the
human mind receives that knowledge
which I shall call *spiritual perception*
and, thirdly, the effects which are
produced on those who possess this
faculty, whether *direct*, as spiritual
and moral; or *indirect*, as bearing
upon natural philosophy and other
secular subjects.

this knowledge to be found? I maintain that it is a matter of pure revelation, undiscoverable elsewhere by fallen man. I know that St. Paul himself teaches us that man *ought* to see, and *might* see, "the eternal power and God-head," in the works of creation—that Nature's fair bosom, spread out before him, reflects the image of his Maker: but I know, also, that in that same chapter (Romans i.), St. Paul is proving that man *never has done so!* because "he does not like to retain God in his KNOWLEDGE:" and so far from finding out God in creation, he dives into its wonders, examines the crust of the earth, classifies the animal, and vegetable, and mineral world; and from

of infidelity against His very ex-
istence ! The great, yet simple
truth, that there is one only supreme,
and holy, and merciful Being, never
has been discovered by man, unassisted
by revelation ! Man, destitute
of spiritual perception, walks blind-
fold, yet swelling with self-suffi-
ciency through the natural world ;
he searches in vain for God in the
muddy nooks of human science—

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I treated in my former lecture: "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge,"—(Hosea iv. 6); *that* is the knowledge which we are now considering. The former knowledge partakes of the wisdom of the serpent—the cunning of the carnal heart; the latter is "the wisdom which is from above"—(James iii. 17)—the knowledge of the Most High. The two sciences are beautifully illustrated

men ; he wrote 3000 Proverbs ; he wrote of trees, of beasts, of fowl, of creeping things, and of fishes, and he was esteemed a philosopher by all people : but if you read through the Book of Proverbs, and more especially through Ecclesiastes, you will find that the wise, the learned, the talented, the scientific, the philosophic Solomon, completely prostrates all human knowledge, reserving his praises for spiritual understanding, which is no other than the fear of God. Thus, in the first chapter of Proverbs, the very first axiom of Solomon is, “*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge* : but fools despise wisdom and instruction.” *This was his very beginning, his*

principia. Then in the second chapter of the Book of Proverbs— “ My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee ; so that thou incline thine ear unto *wisdom* and apply thine heart to *understanding* ; Yea, if thou criest after *knowledge*, and liftest up thy voice for *understanding* ; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as hid treasures ; Then shalt thou understand *the fear of the Lord*, and *find the knowledge of God*. For the *Lord giveth wisdom : out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.*” The whole of Solomon’s writings, and indeed all the Scriptures, are in the same strain ; they *constantly speak of knowledge and*

wisdom as coming from above.

Innumerable passages may be quoted illustrative of this point : that while little is said in the Bible of human knowledge, and *that* generally in its disparagement, in a moral and religious point of view, the Scriptures are full of eulogy of this divine knowledge. Thus God promises his people that he will give them "pastors who will feed them with knowledge and understanding."—(Jeremiah iii. 15). This does not mean that philosophic and scientific essays shall be delivered by his servants ; but that his people should be fed with *spiritual knowledge*. So in many other places —" Whom shall he teach knowledge, and whom shall he make to under-

7). And in the New Testament this spiritual knowledge and understanding is more clearly revealed, in passages too numerous to cite here.* Suffice it to affirm that this knowledge is to be found in God's word, and nowhere else.

* 1 Cor. i. 4, xii. 8; 2 Cor. ii. 14, iv. 6, vi. 6
viii. 7; 2 Peter i. 5, 6, 7, 9; Luke i. 77; Eph. i.
17; Philip i. 9, iii. 8; Col. ii. 3; 1 Tim. vi. 4, &c.

But before I pass from *spiritual knowledge*, to *spiritual perception*, I must observe that much of the former may be acquired by man's unassisted reason, without the possession of the latter. A large portion of the word of God may be understood by the natural powers of man. The Bible is a learned book—it may be studied by the scholar and the man of science, as a merely literary pursuit; they must admire its beauties of composition, its splendid oratory, its glowing images, its mystic prophecies—and they may do this without one spark of *spiritual perception*! Men may do much more; they may gather from it schemes of doctrines; they may receive the gospel system—

inity ...
arnation—justification by inna...
vation by Christ—and the future
life—and yet be destitute of spi-
ritual perception. These truths may
be imparted by *education*: children
nay be instructed in a Trinitarian or
Unitarian creed—in this or that
system of church government—their
heads may be filled with fragment
of divine knowledge, so as to pa
in admirable examination in the Bi
and Prayer Book—and still be tots
“spiritual perception”:

PERCEPTION, OR DISCERNMENT ? *It is that faculty in man which enables him to comprehend the mysteries of God's truth—to study the Scriptures with an enlightened mind—to receive from them divine impressions on his intellectual powers, and on his heart, so as to remodel his whole character.* This power of spiritual perception differs as much from the natural intellect of man, as reason does from instinct ; in both instances the distinction and point of separation is infinitely fine and subtle. It would require more than a philosopher's skill to say where reason ceases and instinct only remains : it is a path which the eagle's eye has not explored ; yet we are sure that there is

is not reason, nor an intelligent
a mere animal. So in the case
fore us—"the God of the spir
all flesh" alone can define the
point where reason fails us,
where the divine gift of spiritus
derstanding commences; yet
difference between them is as
and darkness—life and death.
range of this holy influence ex
from the first remove above it
to the highest class of the mo
mantic intellect: derived of

of spiritual perception. Oh! that "the wise in their own eyes," and the philosophic, would receive this sad truism! for until they do so, they will never search the Scriptures in a docile spirit, nor be made truly "wise, even unto salvation." I might cite passages of scripture almost without end, confirmatory and illustrative of this doctrine of humiliation! But take only our Lord's own ministry—follow his steps, and listen to his instruction : every new disciple exemplifies his utter destitution of this spiritual faculty.

Here is a Jewish Rabbi—a person of distinction—a member of the Sanhedrim—a learned man, of cultivated mind, and well educated—our Lord

born when he is older," said he. And when our Lord explained the subject further, saying, "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit," &c. Nicodemus, still unable to comprehend spiritual truth, exclaims — "*How can these things be?*" He was "a master in Israel," but understood them not, because he was destitute of *spiritual perception*! —(John iii).

Thus it was with a very different person, the woman of Samaria, whom

our Lord instructed at Jacob's well. He would fain have led her mind, through the emblem of water, to spiritual blessings ; but she could not in the least comprehend him ; and he was obliged suddenly to change the subject, and bring home her sins to her. She too, was destitute of *spiritual perception.* (John iv.)

Our Lord's own disciples exhibited the same natural deficiency : they were continually misunderstanding him. He spoke, for instance, of the leaven of the Pharisees ; and occupied only about carnal things, they thought he spoke of mere leaven of bread !—(Matt. xvi. 6–12). And again and again, when he foretold his sufferings, in words than which none

they "were fools, and slow of l
to believe;" and it was not until
his resurrection, "when he op-
their understandings to unders-
the Scriptures," that they perce-
their true meaning. "The un-
standing"—not the will, nor the
sions merely, but the mental fac-
was obscured, and until that ob-
ration was removed, they could

I shall illustrate
by a somewhat longer extract
from St. Paul,
the nature of spiritual wisdom.
—(i. Cor. ii. 12)
the former part
cussed natural knowledge, and professed
godliness; he had a perception of the divine
consideration of wisdom and
yet not the perception of the principles
of the principles of the principles to nought.
of God in wisdom,
the world.

knew: for had they known it,
would not have crucified the I
of glory. But as it is written,
hath not seen, nor ear heard, nei
have entered into the heart of n
the things which God hath prepa
for them that love him. But t
hath revealed *them* unto us by
Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth
things, yea, the deep things of G
For what man knoweth the thi

to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned." We must receive this as a very humbling truth, but at the same time it is a very elevating one. This ignorance is the way to true knowledge. We are all born with clouded intellects; but we are enabled to raise ourselves to the highest places by the aid of that light divine—that spiritual understanding—that spiritual perception. We are

and distressed, and blind, a gift is offered; the Holy Spirit pleased to give us a spiritual portion—a spiritual understanding which we who are blind are enabled to see, and understand, and enter into the merits of all our Redeemer's grace.

Both in the Old and New Testament this truth is further enforced viz : *that spiritual perception is a gift of God*—a new, divinely created power, by which the intellect of

knowing man's disposition, he adds—“Be ye not like unto horse and mule, that have no understanding!” Alas that man should be so rebellious as to need such a caution—“resisting the *bit*,” and “kicking against the pricks!” Yet again it is promised—“All thy children shall be taught of God, and great shall be the peace of thy children.”—(Isaiah liv. 13). And to adduce only one or two authorities from the New Testament—St. Paul, in a splendid passage, proves the divine origin of all spiritual belief in the soul.—(2 Cor. iv. 1-6). In the former of these verses, the Apostle shews that in addition to the natural veil of obscurity which is over every heart, Satan is,

....., and one more dark.
in spite of both, the sacred
exclaims—"God, who comm
the light to shine out of dark
hath shined in our hearts, to giv
light of the knowledge of the g
of God in the face of Jesus Chi
Here is a direct appeal to the gre
act of omnipotence that man
understand—the creation of li
Who that gazes on the glorious
of ".

ness of the human heart. He who said, "Let there be light, and there was light," must *command* spiritual light to shine in man's bosom. Human knowledge would leave it dark, dismal, bolted, barred in its own dungeon, with no chink through which a ray of morals or religion might be admitted ; but through the aid of Jesus Christ, by that spiritual perception, and spiritual understanding, which is the gift of Him who gave the light, and called the world into being ; by this, and this only, can illumination be diffused through the soul !

So also, in his epistle to the Ephesians (i. 16-23), St. Paul seeks this illumination of the mind by the

—mean the spirit of wisdom
revelation in the knowledge
—*that the eyes of their unders*
being enlightened," &c. Observe
remarkable expression—" *the*
the understanding"—these eye
closed, were blinded, and man
" *opened*,"—this is intellectual
ness, and the gift sought is
power of *spiritual perception.*—
also, Coloss. i. 9, 10). Unt
eyes are ^{open}."

prejudice, self-righteousness, and pride, fall from our eyes, which fell from those of the learned Saul of Tarsus, we can never comprehend "the height and depth, the length and breadth, of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord!"

But I now proceed with pleasure to consider *the effects, both direct and indirect, which follow in the mind where spiritual perception is imparted.* The direct spiritual effects demand a much larger space in my lecture than I can now afford them. I can only glance at them. To the man on whom the light of divine perception has dawned, old things seem to have passed away, and all things appear to have become new. The

and dark, is now cheering, bright,
and beautiful, glowing with truth ;
he reads its sacred pages as if meant
for him alone ; *generality* has given
way to *individuality* ; and he sees in
every part of it, its histories, its
types, its morals—the love of his
Saviour Jesus Christ, and the hopes
of his future happiness ; this book
becomes his companion, both in the
night and the morning ; he studies it,
he enriches his mind with its ever-
lasting truths ; he becomes a new
man in disposition and temper ; he
is rescued from blindness ; he has

new eyes, new feelings, new thoughts, and new expressions. When man's heart is thoroughly converted by God's grace, his very countenance, his words, his actions, are all changed, and they instantly display the change. I am not speaking of a new system of ethics ; nor of some new scheme of divinity or church government ; but of a soul-enduring reliance on the mercies of a Redeemer ; which, like the sweet glow of a summer's evening in a well-executed landscape, displays a harmony of colouring, a simplicity of purpose, and a unity of design. No longer does such a man rely on his own resources, he puts his trust in God alone ; he no longer stands up in all the moral dignity of man, but

cile as a little child. These are blessed effects on the mind of one who is endued with spirit perception and spiritual understanding, he becomes a Christian philosopher, and dies in the sure hope of sitting at the right hand of God in the next world whom he has well served and truly glorified in this life. These are spiritual metaphysics which the carnal metaphysician cannot comprehend till he is taught the fellowship of spirit with spirit—the spirit of man with the Spirit of God in high and holy communion; in blessed anticipation of the full fruition of such enjoyment at God's right hand for evermore.

But I hasten lastly to consider, what effects will be produced indirectly on the mind of any person who is imbued with spiritual perception—the intellectual consequences—the bearing of religious light on natural philosophy. And here I am prepared to argue that while human knowledge has no *moral*, much less any *religious* tendency, religion has decidedly and directly a *scientific tendency!* That however enlarged the natural faculties of man may be, however great his reasoning powers—without revelation—they would never act as the pioneers to religion, but religion must be a pioneer to *them!* If man would be truly learned, he must first look on high—he must

will be better able to enter into the study of human science and philosophy.

I have seen this principle frequently illustrated in my intercourse with the humbler classes. I have seen some who were in their natural unconverted state most illiterate, complete boors, incapable of connecting two ideas, or of drawing an inference. I have seen them touched by this mysterious power of God's grace; they have become penitent, believing—frequenters of God's house—moral, holy—renewed in heart and life—and what has been the result upon *their intellectual capacities?* There

has followed an enlargement of mind, a development of intellect, a cultivation and improvement, and almost a refinement of manners, which has surprised me. Many, I doubt not, have witnessed the same civilizing effects of true religion in uneducated persons. And how should it be otherwise? Can a man become wise towards God, without becoming wiser towards men? To maintain the contrary, would be to say, that human knowledge was more excellent than divine!

Equally true is my assertion when applied to the higher grades of society, and to a more extended scale human intellect. Take two men equal talents and equal natural ad-

broad sunshine of divine perception,
walking by faith and not by sight?
The religious man is capable of greater
attention to abstruse subjects, his
mind is more at ease, he stands un-
disturbed by human passions, the
Christian is a heaven-born philo-
sopher. Far from turning aside from
the study of the arts and sciences,

he likes them all. He will talk to you of botany, of entomology, and of ornithology ; he will shew you an insect, tell its family, its *genus*, and its species ; he will examine its most minute parts through a microscope ; but he will not stop there. In that transparent wing, in that tender thing protruding from the head, infinitely small, but possessing the most delicate sensibility and wonderful power, he will trace the finger of God and the footsteps of the Almighty. He gazes upon every bird that pursues its swift course through the bright heavens—upon every insect, however minute, on every reptile, however mean, which crawls upon the surface of the earth—all animate and

nim, and the Christian philosopher exclaims, "These are thy works Parent of Good!"

Neither is such a one uninterested in the wonderful discoveries of modern science, or the new and surprising adaptation of them to practical purposes. But he considers these tremendous inventions as innocuous, beneficial, or mischievous, accordingly as they are applied. The art of printing, for instance—one of the boldest efforts of practical science : the Christian thinks of the noble tide of light and salvation which has flowed forth from that fountain, irrigating even the most distant nations *of the earth in its course*; and he re-

ture is spread before
Christian philosopher
These are thy works
and !"

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purposes of locomotion, as a ~~swiftness~~
winged messenger of mercy ~~beings~~
across the country the minister ~~of~~
God, or the physician of the body,
on some errand of love and bene-
volence; but, beside them, it may
at the same time convey the thief or
the traitor, on some mission of agi-
tation and treason! Again I say,
scientific discoveries are good, or
they are bad, they are a blessing or
a curse, only as they are appro-
priated for the benefit or the detri-
ment of mankind. *Science is power*
without guidance! We oppose it
not, but we would direct it and con-
trol it. If we are to move through
the land with the rapidity of light.

ning, and to travel a mile in a minute, we will take care that our engineer be neither a drunkard nor a madman! We will see who holds the handle; we will have a Christian in charge of our train, or we shall utterly despair of arriving safely at our journey's end.

It may seem to some an unnecessary task that I should defend myself against unfounded charges of puritanical bigotry, and enmity to science; but I may say with St. Paul, "I am become a fool in glorying, ye have compelled me!" I am not, I never was an enemy to real science, to intellectual and secular education, so long as they are under the salutary guidance of Christianity. Might

fidence, my friends, to a ministerial course of seventeen years among you ; and appeal to the hundreds of children now gathered in our Church of England schools, receiving not merely spiritual and moral, but secular instruction also, equal to any schools of their class in the country ? Might I not point to our diocesan school for the middle classes, one of the first established in this county, where an incomparably better secular education is imparted than in any inde-

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receive the best classical and
matical education which can
tained—expressing a hope that
many months have passed a
building may arise in this v
of fair and permanent str
where true science and sou
gion—the doctrines of our Pro
Church—may find a refuge a
pose when you and I lie silent
grave!

Had I been an enemy to se
I had not been here this nigl
would you have been assem
listen to me! Had I wished t
mechanics and tradesmen w
members of our beloved

G

this very Association would never have been formed! 'Tis true we desire not for you the inflated and shallow philosophy, any more than the sceptical and revolutionary principles too often inculcated in *Mechanics' Institutions*; but we wish you to drink of the pure waters of sound Christian philosophy, as provided for you by the great and the good men who have risen up in the bosom of our Church. Hence our reading room—our circulating library—our periodical lectures—many of them, greatly to the credit of the *lecturers, delivered by tradesmen*



and practical men. I wish you all success in your honourable efforts in the acquisition of useful knowledge. Meanwhile believe me, my friends, there is no class of men in existence who are greater friends to science and philosophy than the clergy of the Church of England. They spring from universities, whence have emanated the greatest men, the greatest wits, and the greatest philosophers of the present or any past age. Pitt and Canning, and numerous others who have delighted and astonished the world, owed their education to the seminaries in which your clergy were trained up. It is worse than idle to affirm that the clergy are opposed to the diffusion of knowledge.

tions to a close ; reminding you only of one general principle respecting secular knowledge—the increase of knowledge and of intellectual cultivation, is good or evil, according to the character of the recipient. Give increased intelligence to an angel, and you augment his powers of benevolence ! Give increased intelligence to Satan, and you arm him with new weapons of mischief ! Give increased secular knowledge to *man*, and you do not at all necessarily bring him nearer to God or to virtue—if indeed he be a pious man, it will, as in the case of the good angel, enlarge his sphere of benevolence ; but if he be a *bad man*, his knowledge, his science,

his philosophy, and all his
be but new weapons of
God, and instruments of
for his fellow creatures.
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RAWLINGS AND LAKE, CHELTENHAM.

